

Outcomes: October 6th UGI Strategic Planning Workshop

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With help from over 50 attendees, the October 6th Utah Geospatial Infrastructure (UGI) workshop developed direction and priorities for the implementation of the UGI Strategic Plan.

After a review of the plan and the pre-workshop survey [ppt presentation], input was sought regarding which of the 17 programmatic goals in the Strategic Plan should be pursued either immediate focused efforts or through the development of business plans. The group settled on 9 candidates and voting was conducted with each participant distributing 100 points among the candidates.

The results were as follows:

With the votes tallied [xls full results], it was agreed that the first four programmatic goals should be targeted for immediate planning and implementation.

The second task was to develop some direction as to how each of these priorities should be pursued. Specifically, what strategies should be pursued, what resources should be developed and/or utilized, and how to generate collaborative support for implementation.

- Workshop Discussion
- Where to Next
- Provide Comments/Input

The following synthesizes discussion comments and suggestions that were made on three of the top four programmatic goals that were prioritized during the workshop (note: time constraints prevented the third highest priority goal – the on-line inventory database – from being discussed).

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION

1. Master List of Statewide Data Sets:

- First step is to identify which data are required:
 - Start with the NSDI seven framework layers
 - Broaden list by looking at the 2002 I-Plan
- Start with the easy to collect, available data: establish good procedures for the data that is well known. Begin with "low hanging fruit".
- Assemble a group to identify priorities. It will not be possible to tackle all layers at once. Clear priorities and an incremental approach are required.
- In choosing early priorities, consider choosing projects that require different approaches. For example, choose a data set – such as parcels or zoning – that requires large amounts of coordination and collaboration with local stakeholders. In addition, choose another data set – such as new orthoimagery – that will require significant capital investment and a statewide outlook.
- Next Generation 911 (NG-911) provides a potential business driver for formal statewide data management. NG-911 provides a potential business driver and funding stream for some framework data sets.
- Funding is difficult for GIS or technology projects as standalone initiatives and as such, GIS projects should be linked to business and/or policy drivers. For instance, don't say "we need geologic hazard data", instead consider saying "we are improving public safety by reducing the risks from earthquake damage".
- This should not be viewed as a centralized state government initiative, rather the role of other levels of government (e.g. counties, cities/towns) should be recognized at the outset. Ideally, there will be a high degree of buy-in from participants at all levels of government.
- Relevant, existing regional models may exist. For instance, 12 entities (11 cities + the county) in Salt Lake County have coordinated their efforts to produce a regional street centerline data to support cross jurisdictional E911 response (i.e. mutual aid). The lessons learned from these initiatives can inform other efforts to assemble multi-participant data sets.
- Most GIS users have an interest in data on their neighbors. This observation can help make the case for assembling multi-participant statewide data sets. The initial example that was cited was SITLA's interests in understanding land ownership on areas adjacent to state trust lands. But the same also holds true for the state's interest in neighboring state information or counties needing information on their neighboring counties.

2. Data Standards

- Identify which themes of standards need to be developed. The first step is identifying which “data themes” require standards. The workshop participants identified the two biggest needs as parcels and street centerlines.
- Identify which types of standards need development for each theme. Workshop participants acknowledged that there are many different types of standards including, but not limited to:
 - Metadata standards
 - Data content standards
 - + Geometry
 - + Attributes
 - Data format and schema standards
 - Data accuracy standards
- Identify the business drivers behind standards initiatives. Two business drivers were discussed:
 - The need for data to be interoperable across systems
 - Interests in aggregating county-based data into statewide layers (e.g. for parcels)
- Data standards require regular review and update. Both data capture and data access technologies are constantly evolving. With this evolution, standards may need to be periodically adjusted or adapted.
- Mandatory vs. voluntary standards. If standards are to be made mandatory they need to be promulgated by an organization that has the ability to enforce compliance. While the GISAC mission includes standards development/approval, this body does not have an ability to enforce compliance, or alternatively provide incentives for compliance. This issue needs to be addressed as standards are developed. It was also observed that even voluntary standards can add value as they provide useful guidance to practitioners – especially new practitioners – that are undertaking data development initiatives.
- Alignment with existing standards is desirable. There are a great number of geospatial standards that already exist across many themes of data and covering many types of standards. Such standards are available both from the Federal government and from other states. Whenever possible, Utah should align its standards with such existing work. That said, Utah should be primarily focused on developing standards that meet the specific needs, and at times the unique circumstances of the state. This may mean that portions of existing standards are incorporated into Utah’s standard while other portions are replaced or supplemented.

3. Geospatial Governance Evolution

- Both GISAC and UGIC are open minded to change and evolution and recognize that the geospatial landscape in Utah has evolved considerably over the past 10 years. Any changes to GISAC would require an adjustment to the “administrative rule” that established it. Any changes to UGIC would need to be enacted by their Board of Directors.
- There is a recognition that any change/evolution that is pursued be done so in a collaborative manner and so that neither party “steps on the toes” of the other. GISAC and UGIC should not be perceived as competing with one another. Rather, their missions should be crafted to be complimentary.
- There is potential for GISAC and UGIC to focus on different aspects of the statewide geospatial community in a complimentary fashion. GISAC was established to provide advice and oversight to AGRC as well as a formal liaison to Federal partners and the Legislature. As such, GISAC has an overarching role in matters of state GIS policy and overall geospatial coordination. UGIC was initially formed to oversee the annual statewide GIS conference and has an outlook focused on GIS users. As such, UGIC efforts are oriented to the “grass roots” of the geospatial community. There is significant potential for UGIC to provide meaningful assistance in catalyzing/organizing grass roots efforts on behalf of several of the strategic plan’s programmatic goals which include, but are not limited to:
 - Participation on data standards working groups
 - Assembling information to support the business case for data sharing
 - Supporting the education of decision makers about the value of the UGI
 - Development of a support network to sustain local practitioners and build advocacy

WHAT COMES NEXT?

In general: The survey on priorities that was done as part of this workshop should be broadened across the state to ensure that there is consensus on priority beyond the Wasatch Front (i.e. workshop attendance was biased towards proximity to Salt Lake City).

- Master List of Statewide Data Sets: AGRC volunteered to take the lead on establishing a business plan for this

programmatic goal.

- Standards: Interest groups should form around the themes requiring standards. Two top themes were parcels and street centerlines. James Wingate from Blue Stakes volunteered to lead the formation of a street centerline standards work group. In addition, existing standards (e.g. FGDC Framework Standards) should be researched for relevance to Utah requirements.
- Governance: UGIC and GISAC meeting to discuss opportunities for role evolution and division of missions

COMMENTS

If you would like to comment on the prioritization please login to the GIS Portal and go to the Strategic Planning section of the GIS Forum:

- Forum: the UGI Plan and Implementation Priorities

Additionally, the workshop identified several areas where data standards or data models need to be developed. These areas now have forum postings that are available for review and commenting

- Forum: Parcel Data Standard
- Forum: Streets/Addressing Standard
- Forum: Municipal Boundary Standard